

1. In a requesting computer system, a method for automatically causing configuration information associated with the services of a service provider to be received at consumer modules that consume the services, so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user, comprising the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume;

an act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing a search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume;

an act of accessing the configuration information resulting from the search;

and

an act of the consumer modules receiving the accessed configuration information.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing a portion of an electronic mail address that is representative of services the consumer modules will consume.

3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing a portion of an electronic mail address that is representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an electronic mail domain portion of an electronic mail address.

4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of generating a Uniform Resource Identifier that includes a portion of an electronic mail address, the Uniform Resource Identifier being representative of services the consumer modules will consume.

5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the act of generating a Uniform Resource Identifier that includes a portion of an electronic mail address comprises the following:

an act of generating a Uniform Resource Identifier that includes an electronic mail domain portion of an electronic mail address.

6. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of generating a Uniform Resource Identifier that includes an address, which is representative of a configuration computer system that includes configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume.

7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier that was hard coded into a module included in the requesting computer system.

8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of electronic mail services the consumer modules will consume.

9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of news group services the consumer modules will consume.

10. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of Web services the consumer modules will consume.

11. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing a search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, pushing an identifier to a configuration computer system.

12. The method as recited in claim 11, wherein the act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, pushing an identifier to a configuration computer system comprises the following:

an act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, pushing an identifier to a configuration computer system that contains configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume.

13. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing a search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of the computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, pushing an identifier that is representative of the services the consumer modules will consume.

14. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing a search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of a first configuration computer system receiving an identifier that was redirected from a second configuration computer system.

15. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the requesting computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing a search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of causing a configuration computer system to search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume.

16. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the act of causing a configuration computer system to search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of causing a configuration computer system to search a table of configuration information for information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume.

17. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the act of causing the configuration computer system to search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of causing a search for a configuration computer system that contains configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume.

18. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of accessing the configuration information resulting from the search comprises the following:

an act of accessing configuration information that was coded using XML.

19. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the consumer modules receiving the accessed configuration information comprises the following:

an act of the consumer modules receiving the accessed configuration information from a configuration computer system that has access to the configuration information.

20. The method as recited in claim 19, wherein the act of the consumer modules receiving configuration information from a configuration computer system that has access to the configuration information comprises the following:

an act of consumer modules included in a consuming computer system receiving configuration information from a configuration computer system.

21. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of the consumer modules receiving the accessed configuration information comprises the following:

an act of consumer modules receiving the accessed configuration information from a consuming computer system.

22. In a requesting computer system, a method for automatically causing configuration information associated with the services of a service provider to be received at consumer modules that consume the services, so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user, comprising the following:

an act of the requesting computer system accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume; and

a step for providing configuration information associated with services the consumer modules will consume.

23. The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the step for providing configuration information comprises the following:

an act of a configuration computer system sending configuration information associated with services the consumer modules will consume.

24. The method as recited in claim 23, wherein the act of a configuration computer system sending configuration information associated with services the consumer modules will consume comprises the following:

an act of a configuration computer system sending configuration information to a consuming computer system.

25. In a configuration computer system that provides configuration information for services, a method for sending configuration information associated with one or more services, so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user, comprising the following:

an act of the configuration computer system receiving a request for configuration information associated with one or more services that will be consumed by consumer modules included in a consuming computer system;

an act of the configuration computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing identification of configuration information associated with the one or more services that will be consumed; and

an act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent to the consuming computer system.

26. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system receiving a request for configuration information comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system receiving an identifier that is representative of one or more services that will be consumed by consumer modules of a consuming computer system.

27. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system receiving a request for configuration information comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system receiving an identifier that is sent from the consuming computer system.



28. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system receiving a request for configuration information comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system becoming aware that a requesting computer system has initiated communication with the configuration computer system in accordance with HTTP.

29. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing identification of configuration information associated with the one or more services that will be consumed comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing a search for configuration information associated with one or more services that will be consumed by using the identifier.

30. The method as recited in claim 29, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing a search for configuration information comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing a search for configuration information for services provided by the configuration computer system, wherein the configuration computer system is also the service provider.

31. The method as recited in claim 29, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing a search for configuration information comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing the search of a table that includes configuration information for services provided by one or more service providers that are external to the configuration computer system.

32. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing identification of configuration information associated with the one or more services that will be consumed comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identification of a remote computer system that contains information associated with one or more services that will be consumed.

33. The method as recited in claim 32, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing identification of a remote computer system that contains information associated with one or more services that will be consumed comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identification of a remote computer system that contains information associated with one or more services that will be consumed by consumer modules in the consuming computer system.

34. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system, automatically, and without user intervention, causing identification of

configuration information associated with the one or more services that will be consumed comprises the following:

an act of identifying configuration information that was coded using XML.

35. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing configuration information that is associated with the configuration computer system to be sent.

36. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system redirecting an identifier to a remote computer system that causes identified configuration information to be sent.

37. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information that was contained in the configuration computer system to be sent.

38. The method as recited in claim 37, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information that was contained in the configuration computer system to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information, which was contained in a table included in the configuration computer system, to be sent.

39. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information that was coded in XML to be sent.

40. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information to be sent over a network.

41. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the act of the configuration computer system causing the identified configuration information to be sent comprises the following:

an act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information to be sent over a system bus.

42. In a configuration computer system that provides configuration information for services, a method for sending configuration information associated with one or more services, so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user, comprising the following:

an act of the configuration computer system receiving a request for configuration information associated with one or more services that will be consumed by consumer modules included in a consuming computer system;

a step for providing the requested configuration information.

EXCERPT FROM

43. A computer program product for implementing, in a requesting computer system, a method for automatically causing configuration information associated with the services of a service provider to be received at consumer modules that consume the services, so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user, the computer program product comprising:

one or more computer-readable media carrying computer-executable instructions, that when executed at the requesting computer system, cause the requesting computer system to perform the method, including:

accessing an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume;

causing a search for configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume;

accessing the configuration information resulting from the search; and

providing the accessed configuration information to the consumer modules that consume the services.

44. The computer program product as recited claim 43, wherein the one or more computer-readable media are physical storage media.

45. A computer program product for implementing, in a configuration computer system that provides configuration information for services, a method for sending configuration information associated with one or more services, so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user, the computer program product comprising:

one or more computer-readable media carrying computer-executable instructions, that when executed at the configuration computer system, cause the configuration computer system to perform the method, including:

receiving a request for configuration information associated with one or more services that will be consumed by consumer modules included in a consuming computer system;

automatically, and without user intervention, causing identification of configuration information associated with the one or more services that will be consumed; and

causing the identified configuration information to be sent to the consuming computer system.

46. The computer program product as recited claim 45, wherein the one or more computer-readable media are physical storage media.